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There are very helpful bibliographies at the close of each chapter, and convenient chronological and genealogical tables and maps at the close of the volume.

SIDNEY B. FAY.

*Mémoires du Roi Stanislas-Auguste Poniatowski.* Tome I. (St. Petersburg: Académie Impériale des Sciences. 1914. Pp. xv, 720.)

FEW men who have played a large rôle in history have had such a mania for writing as did the last King of Poland. Throughout his life he was accustomed to jot down his experiences and his impressions; to keep memoranda of the transactions in which he had participated, the conversations he had had, the speeches he had made; to preserve his tremendously voluminous correspondence. With the aid of this mass of documents, he set out in 1771 to compile his memoirs. The task was frequently interrupted and resumed only after long intervals, so that the bulk of the work was done in the very last years of the king's life. After his death there were found among his papers ten volumes of memoirs covering virtually his whole career except—unfortunately—the period from 1778 to March, 1794. These volumes were sealed up by order of the Emperor Paul and have since reposed in the Russian archives. Their publication, long eagerly awaited by students of Polish history, has now been undertaken, with the support of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, by the Director of the Central Archives of the Empire and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, M. Sergius Goriainov.

The present volume contains four of the ten "parts" or "volumes", into which the king divided his memoirs. The first deals with his youth and early travels to Vienna, Paris, and London; the second with his famous sojourn in St. Petersburg and his courtship of her who, as he himself says, "was henceforth to be the arbiter of his destiny"; the third relates the events which led up to his accession to the throne; and the fourth describes the gathering storms of that unhappy reign down to the king's abduction by the Confederates of Bar, on the eve of the First Partition.

It must be confessed that these memoirs offer few surprises or revelations. In large part this is due to the fact that during his lifetime the king communicated extensive extracts from his writings to Prince Adam Czartoryski and others, with the result that in 1862 the firm of W. Gerhard in Leipzig was able to publish the well-known *Mémoires secrets et inédits de Stanislas Auguste*, which—although only in the form of fragments, with the text often badly garbled and most uncritically edited—contained most of the striking episodes and important passages from the second and third parts of the work now before us. The same year Żupanski in Posen brought forth in the original French and in Polish translation a collection of excerpts somewhat fuller and textually more

correct than the Gerhard edition; and in 1870 J. I. Kraszewski published the first and second parts of the *Memoirs* entire (*Biblioteka pamiętników i podróży po dawnej Polsce*, t. III.). If one adds to all this the fact that many Polish scholars have had access to the papers of Stanislas Augustus preserved in the Czartoryski Museum at Cracow, it is clear that the bulk of the material contained in the present volume was already, in one form or another, known to the world—or at least to that part of the world which reads Polish.

At any rate, we have here for the first time the king's own account of his life in full and authentic form. Owing to the methodical manner of their compilation—with the documentary evidence always close at hand—the *Memoirs* are, in general, accurate and reliable beyond most works of their kind. Occasionally, however, one comes upon a false date or an erroneous statement. For example, the king was certainly wrong in supposing (pp. 505–506) that his election was immediately due to Panin's courage in ordering Kayserlingk to disobey the empress and formally propose Count Poniatowski as Russia's candidate for the throne. The credit belongs to Repnin's bold initiative. And we now know that in the famous affair of the arrest of the Four Members at the Diet of 1767 Repnin was acting in strict accordance with orders from St. Petersburg, although the king asserts quite the contrary (p. 601). What chiefly detracts from the value of the *Memoirs*, however, is their manifestly apologetic character, their tendency to gloss over Stanislas's blunders, their reticences—for instance, with regard to his unavowable transactions with the Russian ambassadors—their exasperating silence on so many subjects. What lends them their chief interest is the light they throw upon the character of a king who was, perhaps, the most intelligent, cultivated, and charming man of his nation, but who was also fatally weak of will, corrupt at heart, and utterly devoid of moral courage and stamina.

R. H. LORD.

*Le Maréchal Mortier Duc de Trévise.* Par son Petit-neveu le Colonel FRIGNET DESPRÉAUX, de l'Ancien Corps d'État-Major. In two volumes. (Paris and Nancy: Berger-Levrault. 1913–1914. Pp. viii, 453; 477.)

NONE of Napoleon's marshals is less known than Mortier; no serious biography of him has hitherto been attempted. These two large volumes are apparently a small installment of a work which will by its bulk and documentation, if not in other ways, go far to remedy this state of affairs. They have been put together by a relative of the marshal who has had access to the well-stocked family archives, and who has further made appropriate researches among other documents. The book is in fact little more than a series of excerpts from documents, the author's comment being on the whole unimportant.